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**Pod – report Oct 2010**

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| 1 | **TITLE** |  |
|  | Give your report an informative title and mention the podcast that you are putting online.  Note: The report requires further development.  Podcasting in the Blend: *Ways of Seeing, Walks 0f Life as an approach to putting photojournalism research and skills into practice on the streets of Durban*.  The podcast series that I am exploring acts as a support mechanism for photojournalism students at DUT in preparation for a series of walks around Durban during which the students are required to interact with people, spaces and places and take photographs for a support journal that includes research material and personal reflections. The educational journeys about the streets are titled ‘Ways of Seeing, Walks of Life.’ | 3/2/1/0 |
| 2 | **CONTEXT** |  |
|  | Which current international and/or local trends are triggers for your investigation?  There is a perceived global shift to a more electronic, interactive audio visual means of communication with decreasing focus on printed texts such as books, journals and newspapers. Increasingly young people are more inclined to interact with stills, moving images and audio systems.  In South Africa there is a strong oral tradition and this can be harnessed in education through the introduction of technological innovations such as iPods and audio materials on mobile platforms that include smart cell-phones and electronic tablets. | 3/2/1/0 |
| 3 | **CHALLENGES** |  |
|  | Which challenges and/or opportunities exist in your own teaching environment which you could possibly address through podcasting?  I am a teacher in the Journalism Programme at DUT. As part of the Broadcasting Course the students gain multi-skills in Television and Radio production and become familiar with audio visual methods of communication. This is an advantage when introducing learning technologies such as iPods as the students are already comfortable with using electronic audio equipment.  A constant challenge is that the medium of instruction at DUT is English whereas the majority of students are drawn from previously disadvantaged communities where English is usually a second or even a third language. The indigenous language students generally have difficulty in reading complex text books in English that cover broadcasting and photographic practice. My experience is that such students are more inclined to gain knowledge when English materials are delivered or presented orally. Consequently interactive 2.0 audio technologies offer major benefits for teaching and learning.  Considering that the information is delivered in English in the classroom and that the majority of students are mother tongue Zulu speakers the podcasts provide an opportunity for the students to listen at leisure until they believe they fully understand the contents.  A disadvantage of using podcasting is that the equipment tends to be relatively expensive and needs constant maintenance and security. We have classes of 60 students and scheduling and sharing of equipment is complex.  Certain students who enroll in the Journalism Programme have attended schools that are seriously under-resourced and such students tend to be techno-phobic and uncomfortable with the pace at which other students take so readily to electronic teaching and learning facilities such as podcasting. The techno-phobic students require encouragement and re-assurance that they will quickly become adept at the use of technologies used in the Journalism Programme. The extra attention can be time-consuming. | 3/2/1/0 |
| 4 | **PROBLEM STATEMENT** |  |
|  | Phrase a problem in the form of a question.  How can I use podcasting as a knowledge imparting system to improve my practice as a photojournalism teacher at DUT? | 3/2/1/0 |
| 5 | **THEORY** |  |
|  | Which educational theories seem most relevant to your investigation?  Briefly describe each theory's key characteristics.  (Some examples are connectivism; constructivism, harnessing technology to enhance learning; mobile learning in higher education; the millenlial student, etc)  Social Media: takes advantage of the new 2.0 interactive electronic systems and software to connect citizens in local or global atmospheres allowing swapping and sharing of stories, pictures, video and social issues  Millenial student: a significant proportion of youth today are part of the Y -generation where interactivity through electronic media, smart phones, instant messaging, feedback and social networking systems such as facebook and twitter occupy a prominent space in their lives. They have grown up in the digital realm and are totally at home with electronic information and communications technologies.  Blended learning: Is a flexible approach that combines online instruction and learning with traditional face-to-face approaches in the classroom. The hybrid method emphasises opportunities for learning occurring at different times and places.  Harnessing technology to enhance learning – discussed above. But can also include reference to the revolutionary ‘cloud system’ for storing and delivering knowledge through the use of massive remote server systems that could eventually discard the use of desk-top computers, iPods and other contemporary mobile devices.  Multimedia sharing systems such as you-tube are increasingly being used to deliver learning and teaching materials at universities globally. (e.g. Ted Talks).  Collaborative theory: Promotes working and studying in groups to achieve an interactive dynamic learning circle that establishes a community of practice. Inclusional and transformational orientations and shifts in world views are expected.  Re-framing theory: encourages viewing of situations and people through the eyes of others. Putting yourself in their shoes to understand their values and world view.  Living educational theories: similar to ethnographic theory but primarily focuses on your explanation of your influence in your own learning and on the learning of others: the why question is key (Whitehead 2010) | 6/4/2/0 |
| 6 | **METHODOLOGY** |  |
|  | What is action research?  Action research is a form of systematic, self-reflective inquiry undertaken by teachers to improve their own practices and understanding of these practices. Through careful problem solving and self-reflection, action research empowers teachers to recognize political, practical, and personal problems related to practice and to take action to resolve these problems (Carr and Kemmis 1986).  DUT has a special relationship with renowned action research scholar Professor Jack Whitehead. In a recent seminar at DUT (Oct 2010) he emphasized that action research adopts many approaches that include self study and living histories methodologies with an extending contribution to the wellbeing of communities and wider social frameworks.  How have you used the methodology's structure for your investigation  I have included a reflective cycle of appraisal to assist in adjusting my teaching methods to accommodate more fully the particularities of my multicultural student group. I am preparing a feedback questionnaire that will include a verbal response to elicit a more formal appraisal from students to support their enthusiastic oral expressions in class about the podcasting initiative. | 3/2/1/0  3/2/1/0 |
| 7 | **DESIGN** |  |
| 7.1 | **The vision**  What is the vision for your use of podcasting in your course in the long term?  What will it aim to achieve, how will you share your podcasts with your students, and what reaction do you anticipate from your students?  My vision is to initiate the podcasting environment with my photojournalism students, gain experience, learn from my failures and extend the use of podcasting to my other courses such as Television, film, and my BTech research class.  I anticipate a point where the requirements of all the eight photojournalism walks for the academic year are available at the beginning of the year on a dedicated Photojournalism website.  Student’s pictures from the walks will be posted on the site for audio comment by fellow students as part of a peer review mechanism  The website will show examples of good and mediocre ‘Walks’ diaries, the hard-copy support visual journal that contains pictures and student’s experiences of each walk.  Route maps of each walk will be available on the website. | 3/2/1/0 |
| 7.2 | **Podcasting in Higher Education at DUT**  How will the podcasting encourage interaction/ collaboration/ engagement/ participation/ active learning?  The podcasts allow the students to research each destination on the walk and come prepared for the pre-walk classroom conversation in a manner that stimulates dialogue and interest around the upcoming walk.  The feedback podcasts prepared by each student after a walk will be played in class over speakers to stimulate dialogue around the issues of photojournalism and the culture and times on the streets of Durban. | 3/2/1/0 |
| 7.3 | **Working smart**  How will you use podcasting to make your life easier?  I will not have to continually spend time in class explaining the details and research requirements of each walk.  Students will use details in the podcast to draw draft maps of the upcoming walk and arrive in class with a good idea of the route they are about to take. Advantages include the opportunity for the students to discuss the walks with their parents who can sometimes become alarmed at stories about some of the potentially ‘strange’ places visited on the route.  In the pre-walk class conversations I have to repeat the general instructions and expected behavior and dress for each walk. The process is time-consuming and can be tedious to the attentive students who recall the instructions given | 3/2/1/0 |
| 7.4 | **Student Attendance**  How do you think podcasting will affect student attendance? How will you design your podcasts to enthe benefits will improve once we have a dedicated website, loan iPoda and more students with smart phones for downloadsable students to get the best from face to face meetings and learning via electronic media?  My class registers indicate that attendance in the pre-walk classes and on the walks has improved since the introduction of the podcasting audio instructions and feedback sessions. | 3/2/1/0 |
| 7.5 | **Feasibility**  What infrastructure and resources (a) are, and (b) ought to be in place in your learners' environment in order for this project to be successful?   At present I use various means of making the podcasts available due to limited equipment. I use a combination of audio recorders, amplified speakers, earphones, and storage and access on computers in the general computer lab. Cellphones are also an option. While the results are encouraging I look forward to a time when we have a dedicated website for the photojournalism course so that the maximum benefit can be gained from the use of podcasting. | 3/2/1/0 |
| 8 | **IMPLEMENTATION** |  |
| 8.1 | **Pilot activity**  Describe the pilot activity you have tried out with two or three volunteer students/participants (or your colleagues!)  The pilot activity has been implemented with the photojournalism class of 60 students, split into two groups, A and B. The second group walks in the second semester and have more exposure to the podcasts.  The students listen on earphones to the instructions for each meeting that are stored on a computer. The podcast includes a description of the route, turn-around point, required pictures, and a list of spaces and places to be researches before the pre-walk class | 3/2/1/0 |
| 8.3 | **Feedback**  What feedback did you receive from volunteer students/participants? Provide a basic analysis.  The student participants have been enthusiastic about the process and have heightened their interest in the walks and have increased the benefits gained from taking students out of the classroom for a learning experience on the streets | 3/2/1/0 |
| 9 | **REFLECTION** |  |
| 9.1 | **Assumptions**  Which assumptions did you make about yourself and your learners? What did you learn from your assumptions after implementing the activity?  I assumed that I would be fairly good at compiling and voicing the podcasts and that the students would embrace the novel educational approach. I discovered that the students took to the pilot programme even more enthusiastically than I anticipated. Some students are about to create podcasts saying how they reacted to the podcasts. | 3/2/1/0 |
| 9.2 | **Future adjustments**  In the light of the feedback received and the lessons you have learnt, how will you adapt your activity and/or your classroom during the next action research cycle?  I aim to prepare the pre-walk podcasts at least two weeks in advance instead of my current system of delivering the podcast a few days before the walk.  A more relaxed tone has developed in my recorded voice as the experiment has progressed and the students report that they in turn have detected the difference and feel more comfortable while listening through the headphones. Apparently the relaxed tone assists with them recalling the requirements of the walk.  I have gradually introduced more detail into the recordings as the students become increasingly comfortable with the podcasts.  Considering that the podcasts are about the visual medium of photojournalism I am now planning a series of vodcasts that will include photos of places and people that will be visited along the routes.  A facebook group covering the Ways of Seeing Walks will soon be operational providing opportunities for the students to post their work and have conversations about their pictures and wider aspects of photojournalism. A monthly award for the most popular pic will be started.  In 2010 the students will be required to keep a personal blog that covers their experiences on the Ways of Seeing Walks of Life. The blogs will include pictures, and a podcast prepared immediately after each walk. The blogs can eventually be used by students to sell their photographs to the media and others. | 3/2/1/0 |
| 9.3 | **Impact**  What impact do you envisage this intervention could make, or has made on either or all of the following: you, your learners, the curriculum and the institution?  I have found that my face-to-face time in the traditional classroom can be reduced and that the students are more fully conscientised before each walk with awareness of the route and information from their research based on instruction contained in the pre-walk podcast.  Note: In 2007 as part of the BTech Research e-learning initiative I included a podcast recorded by a highly successful student about how the e-learning Moodle website helped her to stay motivated and achieve academic heights. The student was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship and went on to study at the University of Chicago. The podcast has encouraged successive student groups to engage in a collaborative way with colleagues on the website and to complete their research dissertations on time. | 3/2/1/0 |
| 9.4 | **Lessons learnt**  What lessons have you learnt in the various phases during your year as a DUT Podcaster?  I have discovered that sufficient time and energy must be allocated to the actual writing and recording of a podcast. Students easily detect, often through the tone of your voice, that you have rushed the process and can deduce that you don’t take podcasting seriously.  A thorough understanding of the theories and methodologies of mobile audio teaching and learning is essential to achieve maximum benefits from a podcasting programme. In our pilot group I found difficulty in joining the regular Tuesday sessions at CELT and discovered that I was lacking in ways that would have been easily corrected if I had diligently engaged with the suggested readings.  The student feedback on their initial podcasting experiences on the Ways of Seeing experiment has been positive. They really enjoy the podcasts and have asked for continuation and extended of the programme. | 3/2/1/0 |
| 10 | **BIBLIOGRAPHY** |  |
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| 11 | **WOW! Factor** |  |
|  | Up to six marks will be awarded for the wow factor. | 6/4/2 |
|  | **TOTAL** |  |

 Good luck :)